What is claimed is:

1. A method for controlling a system for automatically generating and distributing information, comprising the steps of:

   a) monitoring a document as it is processed by a user;

   b) identifying a reference to a party in said document;

   c) accessing a database of information relating to relationships between an enterprise and other parties; and

   d) if a record relating to said party exists in said database, providing information relating to a relationship between said enterprise and said party to said user.

2. A method as described in claim 1 where said information is generated, at least in part, based upon survey responses by system users.

3. A method as described in claim 2 where said user is requested to respond to a survey when said information is provided and said user's response to said survey is used to update said information.

4. A method as described in claim 1 where said information provided relates to a value of said relationship to said enterprise.

5. A method as described in claim 4 where said information includes further information relating to a quality of said relationship.

6. A method as described in claim 5 where said further information includes a weighted sum of ratings for a plurality of characteristics of said relationship.

7. A method as described in claim 5 where said further information is provided in graphical form.

8. A method as described in claim 1 where said information is generated, at least in part, based upon survey responses by other enterprises.

9. A method as described in claim 1 where said other enterprise responses are collected and distributed by a third party in a confidential and secure manner to protect critical confidential information of said other enterprises.

10. A method as described in claim 1 including the further step of formulating an inquiry to an information source in response to a request from said user.

11. A method as described in claim 10 where the scope of said inquiry, and to which information source, or sources, said inquiry is to be sent, are determined based on the nature and importance of the matter to which said inquiry relates.

12. A system for automatically generating and distributing information, comprising:

    a) a computer for processing documents;

    b) a database system comprising:

        b1) a database of information relating to relationships between an enterprise and other parties; and

        b2) a sever for controlling access to said database and for communicating with said computer; where

    c) said computer is programmed to:

        c1) monitor a document as it is processed by a user on said computer;

        c2) identify a reference to a party in said document; and

        c3) send information identifying said party to said server; and where

    d) said server is programmed to:

        d1) receive said identifying information;

        d2) access said database for information relating to a relationship between said enterprise and said party; and

d3) if a record relating to said party exists in said database, send said information relating to a relationship between said enterprise and said party to said computer.

13. A system as described in claim 12 where said information is generated, at least in part, based upon survey responses by system users.

14. A system as described in claim 13 where said server is further programmed to send a request to said computer for said user to respond to a survey when said information is provided and to update said information with new information reflecting said user's response to said survey.

15. A system as described in claim 12 where said information sent relates to a value of said relationship to said enterprise.

16. A system as described in claim 15 where said sent information includes further information relating to a quality of said relationship.

17. A system as described in claim 16 where said further information includes a weighted sum of ratings for a plurality of characteristics of said relationship.

18. A system as described in claim 16 where said further information is provided in graphical form.

19. A system as described in claim 12 where said information is generated, at least in part, based upon survey responses by other enterprises.

20. A system as described in claim 12 where said other enterprise responses are collected and distributed by a third party in a confidential and secure manner to protect critical confidential information of said other enterprises.

21. A system as described in claim 12 where said computer is further programmed to receive a request from said user for information from other information sources and said server is further programmed to formulate an inquiry to an information source in response to said request.

22. A system as described in claim 21 where the scope of said inquiry, and to which information source, or sources, said inquiry is to be sent, are determined based on the nature and importance of the matter to which said inquiry relates.

23. A computer programmed to process documents and further programmed to:
    a) monitor a document as it is processed by a user on said computer;
    b) identify a reference to a party in said document; and
    c) send information identifying said party to a server; and
    d) receive and display to said user information relating to a relationship between an enterprise and said party.

24. A computer as described in claim 23 where said further information is displayed in graphical form.

25. A sever in for controlling access to a database a system for automatically generating and distributing information to system users, said server being programmed to:
    a) receive information identifying a party;
    b) access said database for information relating to a relationship between an enterprise and said party; and
    c) if a record relating to said party exists in said database, send said information relating to a relationship between said enterprise and said party to a computer for display to a system user.

26. A system as described in claim 25 where said information sent relates to a value of said relationship to said enterprise.

27. A system as described in claim 28 where said information sent includes further information relating to a quality of said relationship.

28. A system as described in claim 27 where said further information includes a weighted sum of ratings for a plurality of characteristics of said relationship.

29. A computer readable medium for providing instructions to a computer, said instructions controlling said computer to:

> a) monitor a document as it is processed by a user on said computer;
>
> b) identify a reference to a party in said document; and
>
> c) send information identifying said party to a server; and
>
> d) receive and display to said user information relating to a relationship between an enterprise and said party.

30. A computer readable medium for providing instructions to a server, said instructions controlling said server to:

> a) receive information identifying a party;
>
> b) access said database for information relating to a relationship between an enterprise and said party; and
>
> c) if a record relating to said party exists in said database, send said information relating to a relationship between said enterprise and said party to a computer for display to a system user.